



Commonwealth of Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care

Board Retreat

August 18th 2021





Introductions

Retreat Objectives

- Establish a shared understanding of EEC's most urgent priorities
- Orient new members to the role of the Department
- Explore how public-private-partnerships might help accelerate, scale, or innovate solutions
- Consider how EEC might monitor impact of investments
- Establish directionality for the strategic work of the board, in collaboration with EEC leadership, for FY22



Retreat Agenda

Topic	Time	Lead
Introductions & Agenda	9:00am	Chair Lesaux
Big Picture/ Overview <i>Presentation and Discussion</i>	9:30am	Commissioner Aigner-Treworgy Members of the Board
Break	11:00am	
Leveraging Data to Inform and Monitor Innovation <i>Presentation and Discussion</i>	11:20am	Jocelyn Bowne Members of the Board
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Closing	2:50pm	Chair Lesaux



Big Picture Overview

- EEC within a High Quality Birth to Eight Education and Care System
- Challenges and Opportunities for the Commonwealth
- Innovation in Child Care



Key Provisions of An Act Relative to Early Education and Care

- 1 Be the lead agency for administering and providing early education and care programs and services
- 2 License and monitor for non-school based care settings, including child care and residential programs
- 3 Increase the sustainability and availability of programs, including the dissemination of information
- 4 Facilitate the development of the early education and care workforce
- 5 Administer mental health consultation, technical assistance, and other professional supports
- 6 Manage eligibility, recruitment, waitlist, parent co-pays, and placement management for subsidies
- 7 Analyze and evaluate budget requests, seek and allocate federal funding, manage funding line items
- 8 Develop a plan for creating a universally accessible preschool mixed-delivery system and address the needs of families with infants and toddlers
- 9 Establish and regularly update a database of early educators and providers
- 10 Establish and update a database of children waiting for and receiving early education and care services.

EEC Programs and Services Overview

Support Directly to Families

- Subsidized child care tuition-reimbursement for eligible families
- Information and referrals to resources
- Education-based home visiting supports
- Coordinated Family and Community Engagement grants to support community collaboration and services to families

Oversight and Support to Early Education and Care, Out of School Time, and Residential and Placement Programs

- Funding for services through contracts
- Licensing, monitoring, and investigations of non-parental care settings
- Background Record Checks for all workforce
- Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS)
- Mental Health Consultation
- Targeted grants
- Management of the Family Child Care System network

Training and Support for Educators

- Professional Development- “Strong Start” network of qualifying professional services for the workforce
- Teacher qualification standards and approvals
- Teacher supports and coaching
- Higher education scholarships

Cross-Department Collaboration

- Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
- Department of Higher Education
- Department of Children and Families
- Department of Mental Health
- Department of Youth Services
- + Others



EEC Role in Oversight, Equitable Access, and Quality Support



EEC has comprehensive oversight for the child care system and many interconnecting points of support for families with young children.

Licensing and Oversight



- Licensing for childcare providers serving birth-through-age 14, private preschools, Out of school time, and residential and placement programs for children with special needs and in the child welfare system
- Background record checks for all child care and residential and placement providers
- Inspections, investigations for all reports and allegations of program violations
- Workforce certification and licensing

Access and Engagement



- Coordinated family engagement in communities to ensure that parents have access to developmental supports and resources
- Parent education, referrals, and resources through community partners
- Childcare tuition assistance for 55,000 families through the Child Care and Development Block Grant
- Head Start State Collaboration Office, including additional state grants to enhance Head Start services and workforce supports

Quality Program and Educator Supports



- Administration of the Quality Rating and Improvement System for child care providers across the mixed delivery system
- Professional Qualification registry for all educators and the field, including certification of qualifications that meet regulatory requirements and supports for educators to increase their competency
- Professional development, coaching, technical assistance and training for professionals in the field, including educators and administrators
- Mental health consultation, targeted coaching, and other quality supports targeted to programmatic quality

Strategic Direction for the Department (2020)



The Department has recently undergone a revision of the Vision and Mission through a strategic planning process. With a new Commissioner, the Board of EEC has reset the priorities given the evolving landscape of the work and re-established the direction for the Department.

Our Vision-

The world we would like to see

EEC's vision is that children, youth, and families reach their full potential now and in the future.

Mission-

The role we play in achieving the vision

The Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care (EEC) creates the conditions for children, youth, and families to thrive socially, academically, and economically.

We do this by:

- Working across organizations and sectors to build an equitable system of safe, affordable, high quality early education and care
- Supporting residential, placement, out of school and after school, and early education and care programs and educators in their essential work with children and youth
- Increasing opportunities for families to support their children and attain economic mobility

EEC Strategic Goals

The new strategic action plan lays out goals for the four key pillars of EEC's work. Leveraging the assets of the state governance system established in 2004 has become a key pillar of the strategic direction ahead.

Children, Youth, Families



Children are on track for success in school and to reach their full potential. Their families are empowered to work, build their skills, and attain economic mobility while supporting their children's education and development.

Educators



The early childhood and out-of-school time workforce is professionally prepared, well supported, adequately compensated, and culturally and linguistically representative of the population it serves.

Programs



Programs will increase their sustainability, engage in continuous quality improvement, and promote high-quality education and healthy development among children and youth.

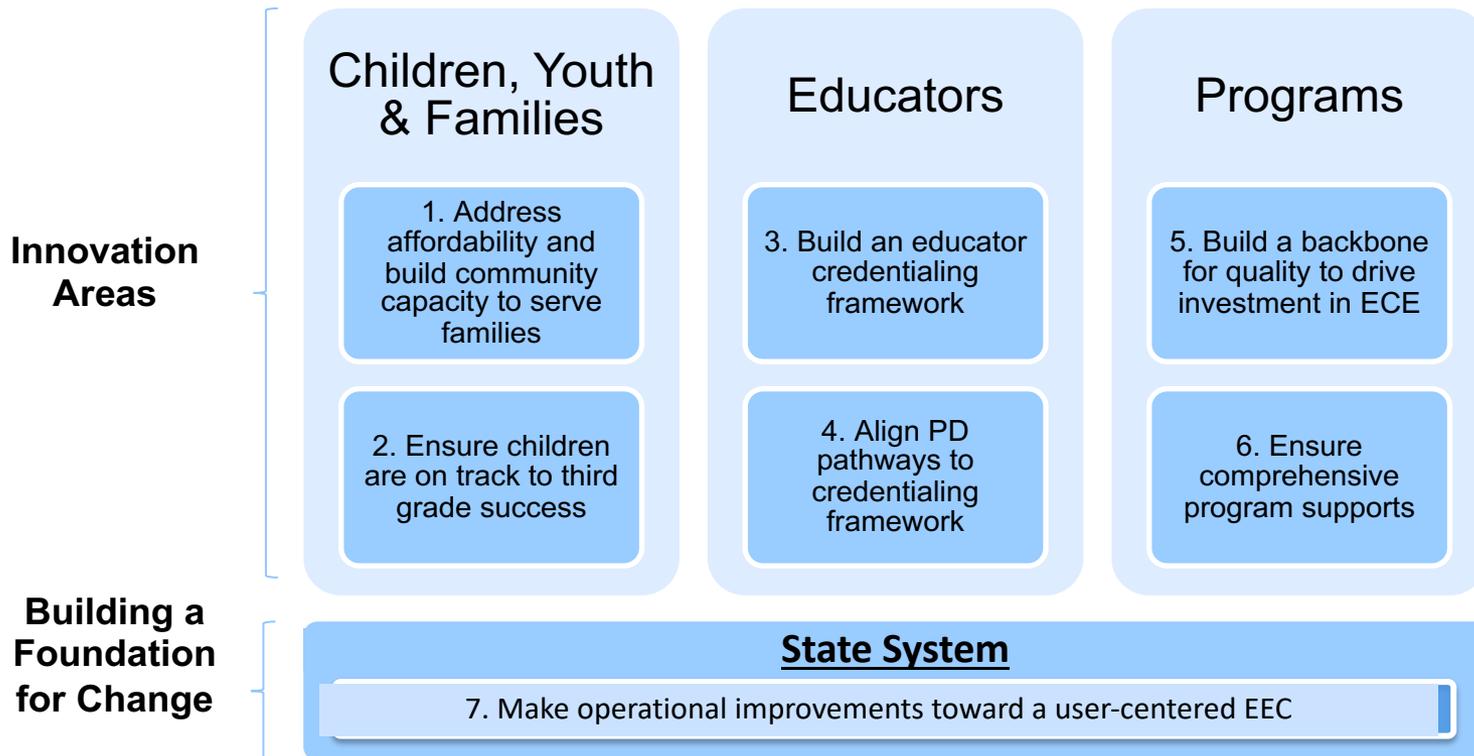
State System



To efficiently and effectively steward public investments in early education and care with utmost integrity, transparency and accountability to the people of Massachusetts.

EEC Strategic Plan Strategies

The Strategic Plan updates EEC actions based on new research in the field to achieve the founding goals of the Department. The strategies laid out in the Plan offers the ability to leverage the consolidated governance model to ensure that comprehensive goals for each critical pillar of the mixed-delivery early education and care system are achieved.



Agency Staffing Functions



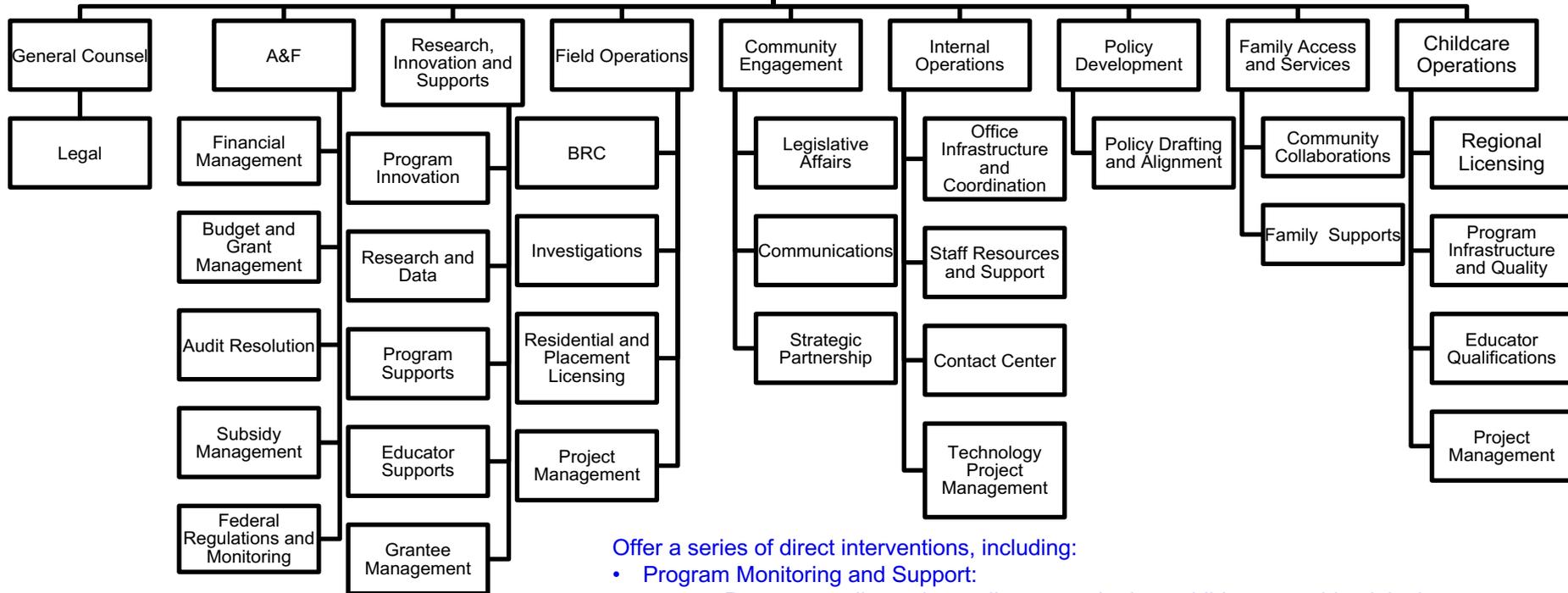
Board of Early Education and Care

Commissioner

Commissioner's Office

Oversee distribution of public funds to advance strategic vision with integrity, transparency, and towards maximum impact.

Organize policies, communications, constituent services, technology, and operations around unique constituent strengths and needs, driven by feedback loops across core audiences and beneficiaries.



Develop and pilot innovative, scalable solutions to address leading barriers and challenges faced by families, educators, and programs. Advance research objectives to inform field-wide improvement and to direct resource distribution.

Offer a series of direct interventions, including:

- Program Monitoring and Support:
 - Program quality and compliance monitoring - child care, residential, placement
 - Field support to investigate / address issues
 - Fund a program support infrastructure aligned to licensing and quality efforts
- Educator Monitoring and Support: training, Background Record Checks, qualifications monitoring; support to access training/education, advance career pathways, credentialing
- Family Supports: Maintain subsidy and community support systems; define children and family indicators for success and align family supports to indicators



Priority Outcomes and Indicators from Strategic Plan

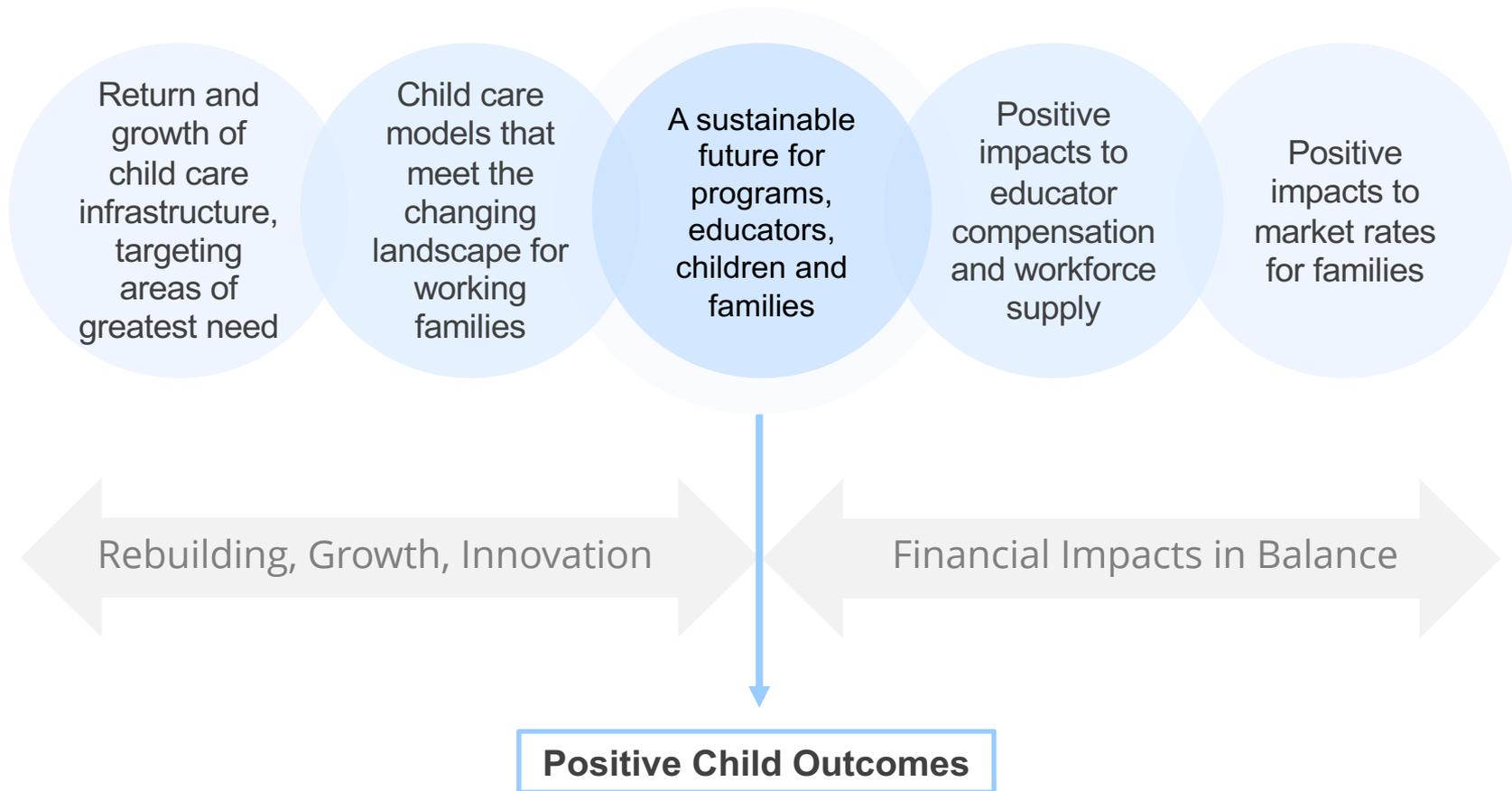
Outcomes	Leading indicators
Programs stabilize and increase their sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none">a) Growth in licensed capacity (slots) by region, program typeb) Growth in licensed agencies by region, program typec) Decrease in program closings
Greater supply of professionally qualified EEC workforce	<ul style="list-style-type: none">a) Increase in professionally qualified EEC workforce across MAb) Increase in qualified EEC workforce diversity by race, ethnicity, primary languagec) Increase in average compensation by professional category

Outcomes	Leading indicators
Families gain equitable access to needed supports	<ul style="list-style-type: none">a) Increase in licensed capacity in areas of greatest needb) Increase in #/% of children in low-income families receiving childcare subsidiesc) Increase in #/% of infants and toddlers in low-income households receiving childcare subsidiesd) Increase in children ages 9-35 months receiving developmental screening with parent-completed tool like ASQ
Children are on track to 3rd grade success	<ul style="list-style-type: none">a) Increase in 4th grade reading proficiency levelsb) Increase in 4th grade math proficiency levels

Discussion

- How do we apply the sector challenges outlined in the readings to the Massachusetts landscape? To the B-8 system we outlined in our strategic plan?

Reframing Outcomes within a New Landscape





Landscape: The State of Child Care (Pre-COVID)

- **Total capacity for 250,000 children** up to 14 years old; **750,000 children in full-time working households**
- **55,000 children are supported by EEC subsidies** targeted to low-income and vulnerable families
- MA has a robust **mixed-delivery model for child care**, including Family Child Care homes (FCC), a child care run from a private home, with small group sizes ranging from 6-12 children across all age groups.
 - The business model currently used by EEC’s network of providers requires full-enrollment for most businesses to break even.
- ~8,200 non-profit and for-profit business providers (6,000 Family Child Care Homes & 1,200 Centers)
 - 50% do not receive any public subsidy and are wholly funded by private pay fees from parents
 - 15% have most their enrollment subsidized (2/3 or more)
 - 35% have a mixed of private pay and subsidize enrollment
- Childcare was a \$4B industry in MA prior to the pandemic. Estimated losses of approximately \$250M per month during closure from private pay fees alone.
- Along with transportation, child care is considered one of the critical enablers of employment and economic recovery through COVID-19 reopening.

AVERAGE ANNUAL FAMILY FEES	Center Average	Center Maximum	FCC Average	FCC Maximum
Infant	\$25,924.08	\$43,188.00	\$12,330.96	\$25,200.00
Toddler	\$22,434.60	\$90,000.00	\$12,534.36	\$25,200.00
Preschool	\$16,506.24	\$113,760.00	\$11,209.08	\$24,600.00

For most center-based programs, infant/toddler care is subsidized by preschool classroom revenue

PRE-COVID AVERAGE CLASSROOM REVENUE - PRIVATE PAY

Infant Classroom	\$181,468.56
Toddler Classroom	\$201,911.40
Preschool Classroom	\$330,124.80

Average Provider Size:
FCC: 8 children (range from 6-12)
Center-Based: 5 classrooms

Discussion

- Within the new landscape, what do we see as the most urgent and immediate opportunities unique to Massachusetts?



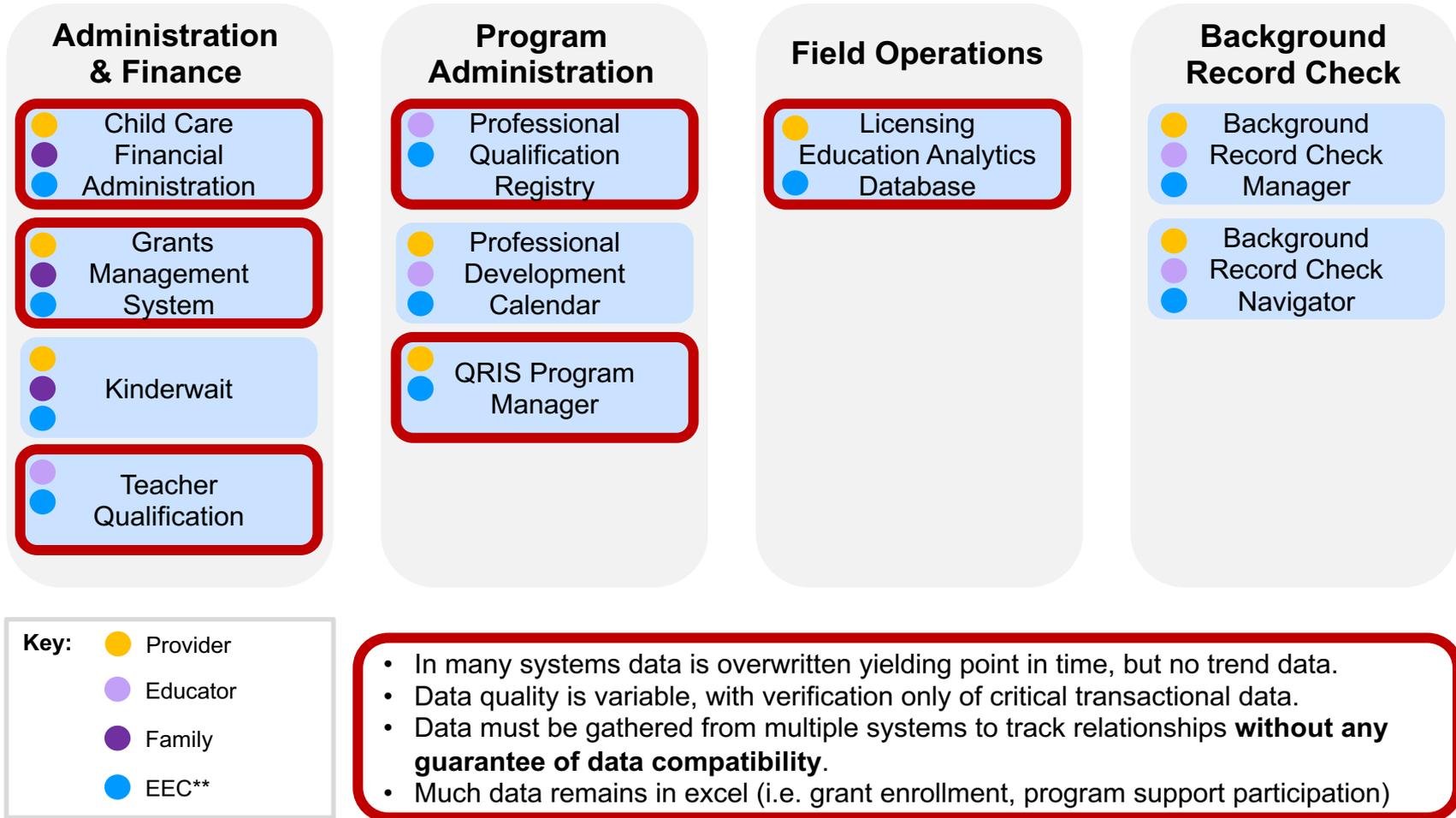
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Leveraging Data to Inform and Monitor Innovation

EEC at a Glance: Technology Systems

EEC leverages **10 technology systems*** to support its business functions. Across systems, **technology in general is a challenge** for EEC staff and customers.

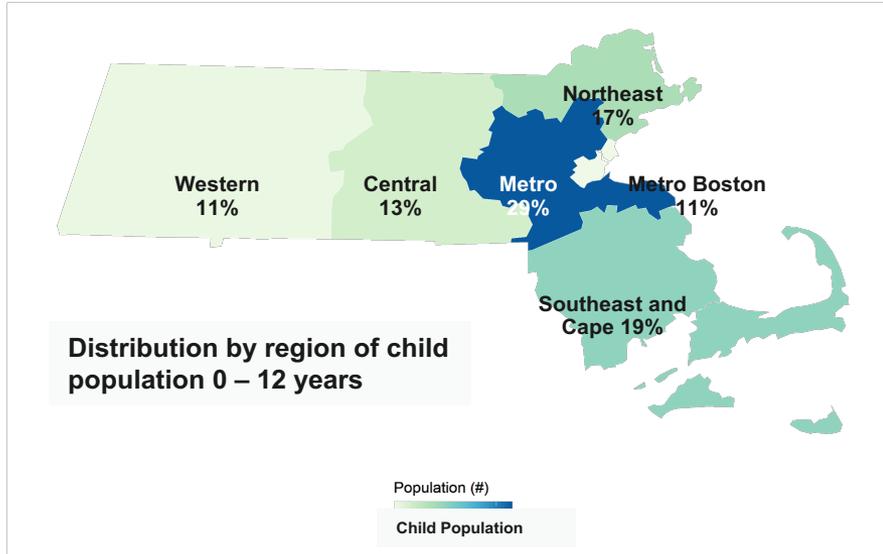


*While these are currently the primary systems at EEC, there are also numerous legacy systems running on the back-end to support them.

**EEC is also a customer for these technologies as the supporting staff and system contracts reside in EOE.

Families and Children: What We Know

- There are 948,589 children of ages 0-12 years in MA.



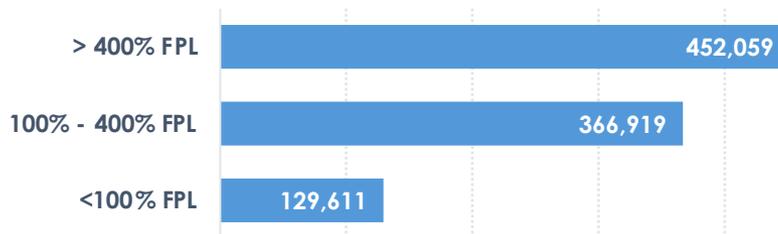
Key Takeaways

- Out of the 948,589 children of ages 0 to 12 years in Massachusetts, **37% are 0-5 years of age.**
- The **largest population of children is in the Metro Region.** Metro Boston and Western MA have the fewest children of ages 0 to 12 years.



- **71% of children live in households with all adults in the workforce.***
- **63% of children in MA live in households with incomes below the state median.**

63% of children in the state have household incomes below the state median.*



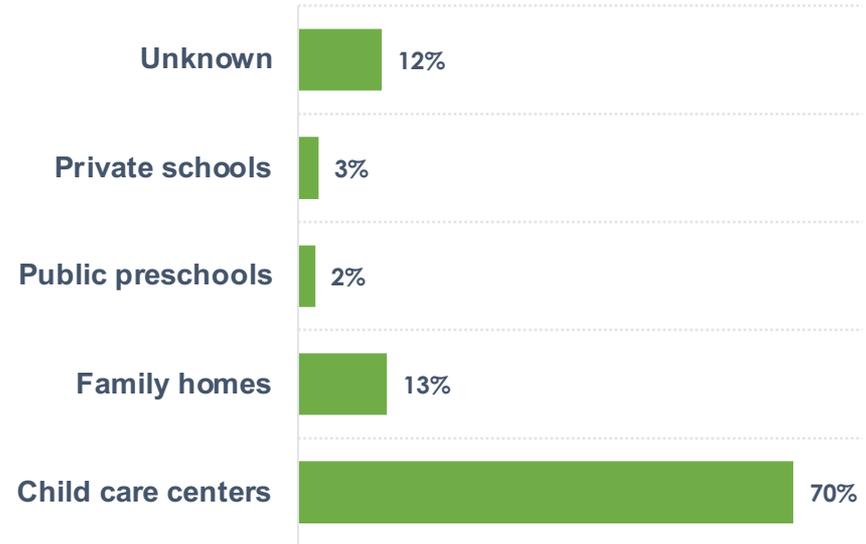
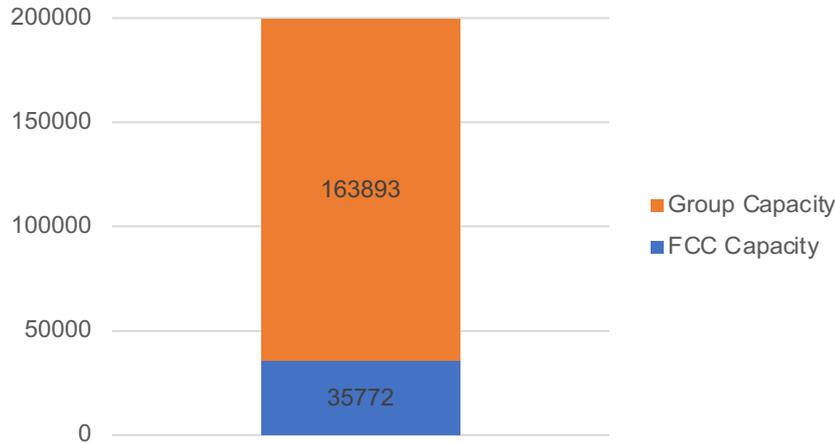
Key Takeaways

- Of the 948,589 children of ages 0 to 12 years, **63% have household incomes less than the state median income (SMI),** equivalent to ~500% FPL.*
- **52% of children have household incomes < 85% SMI (400% FPL),** the expanded income threshold for subsidy-based child care financial assistance.**

Child Care Capacity

There is licensed capacity for 20% of MA 0-12 year olds

Of those in out of home care, best estimates suggest 70% are enrolled in private programs



CFCEs engaged with 150,000+ children in FY21 – 1200+ referrals made for early ed

June 2019 **Subsidies support a limited number of potentially eligible families**

Children served by subsidy: Jun 2019		58,738
Children served by subsidy: Feb 2021		43,000



Families: Points for Consideration

Goals for families and children

- 1. Families have equitable access to necessary supports, particularly quality childcare***
- 2. Supports in place for children to be on track to 3rd Grade Success***

Data Collection, Enhancements, & Projects Currently In-Progress

- Bipartisan Policy Center survey of parent needs/ focus groups with business leaders
- ARPA Child care stabilization grant to track capacity by classroom and enrollment
- Grant requiring improved reporting of tuition rates to track cost
- Supply-demand dashboard will support better understanding of family options and choices

Considerations for Data Discussion

- MA capacity is limited in comparison to potential need and cost further limits access for families
- COVID has upended all patterns of family needs, while highlighted the essential role childcare plays
- Ongoing calibration will be essential in responding to families

What we know about our workforce

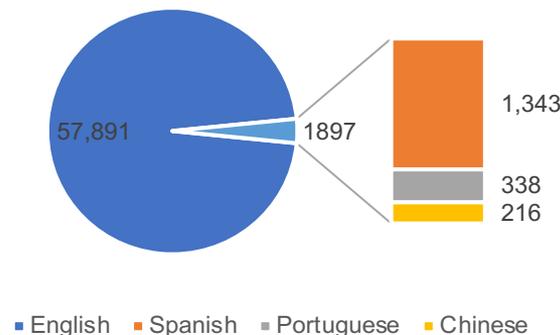
The workforce is diverse, needs sustainable wages, and desires career advancement: A pre-COVID survey of educators conducted by UMass Boston in 2019 found:

- Strong workforce diversity overall, but diversity decreases at higher levels of salary and credential
- 1 in 5 in the workforce is the sole earner and almost half reported dependents in their households
- ECE professionals are highly motivated to pursue degree programs and advance their education, but need support in their primary language, flexibility in options and schedule, and access to mentoring, coaching, and academic advising – as well as concentrated efforts to overcome racial disparities in access to education. Early educators also have extensive experience in the field in all program types.

Who is the Workforce?

92% female
 32% people of color, compared to 22% in state
 47% more than HS degree
 24+ primary languages with English, Spanish, Portuguese, and Chinese most common

EEC Essentials Completion
 (required of full workforce)



- 58% center-based, 39% FCC educators desire for a college degree
- 31% center-based and 14% FCC educators attended a college course (2018)
- 2,761 students funded for higher education courses by EEC/ DHE
- 12,868 Educators enrolled in Pyramid Model courses (30% completion rate)

Diversity of educators require diverse supports and EEC funded supports may not be fully meeting the needs/ ambitions of the field



Workforce: Points for Consideration

Goals:

- 1. Increase supply of diverse, professionally qualified educators**
- 2. Increase numbers of educators entering and staying in the profession**

Data Collection, Enhancements, & Projects Currently In-Progress

- Educator Registry will provide information about where educators work, their roles and compensation
- Eventually this will also include credential information

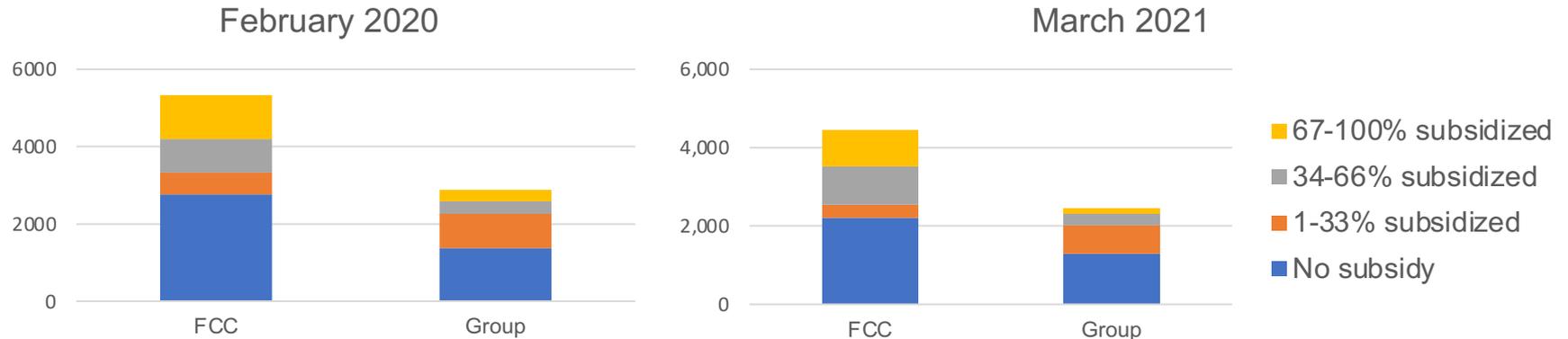
Considerations for Data Discussion

- Strong diversity and motivation of the MA workforce
- The workforce was vulnerable prior to COVID: 1 in 5 early educators in the US falls below FPL. MA childcare workers earn on average \$30,090 annually – 34% less than public school preschool teachers (BLS 2018)
- Retention has long been a challenge and now programs report a severe hiring shortage
- MA defines minimum entry requirements but does not track skill development
- A better understanding of the size, employment status, qualifications and salaries is essential

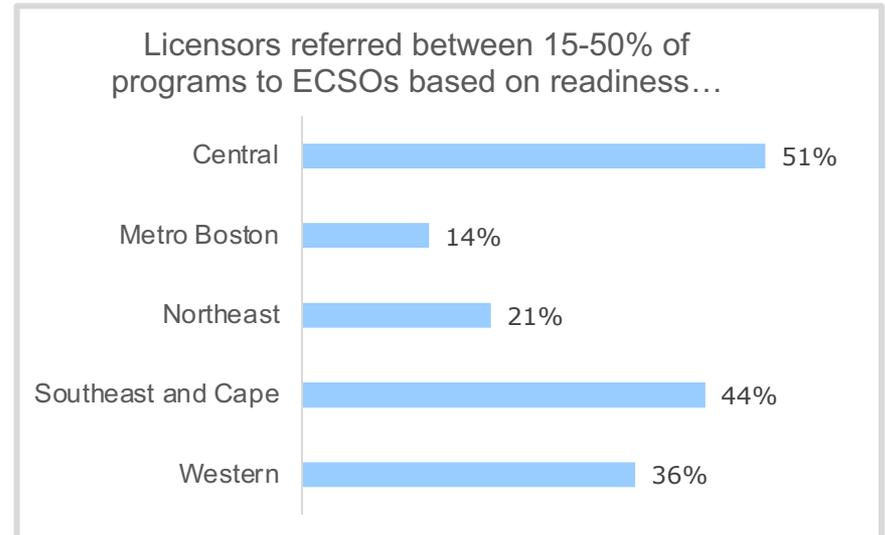
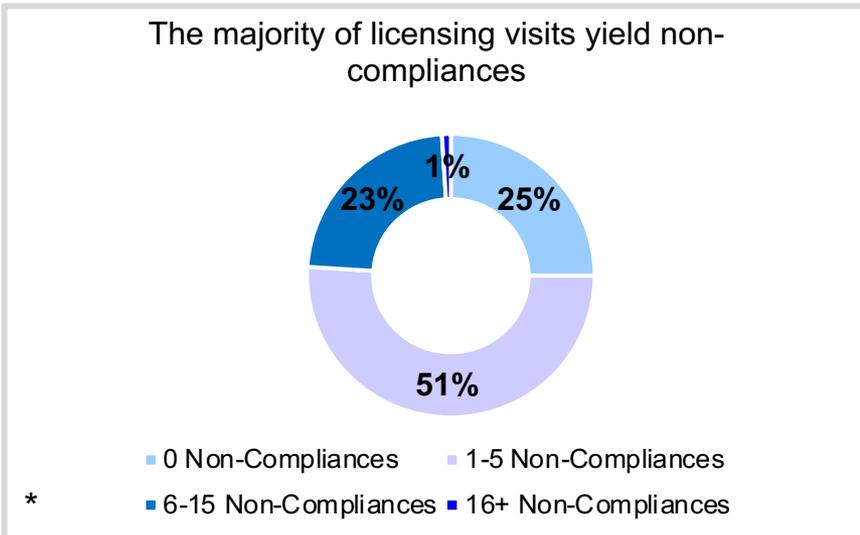
Programs: What We Know

Provider numbers are slowly returning to pre-COVID levels

- Percent serving subsidized children holds constant
- 1,054 GSA and 2,354 FCC participants in potential provider meetings



In FY 21, 10% of programs utilized ECMH consultations, 2% worked with PDCs. The majority of these programs were larger and serve subsidized children.





Programs: Points for Consideration

Goals:

- 1. Programs are stabilized and increase sustainability***
- 2. Programs invest in continuous quality improvement***

Data Collection, Enhancements, & Projects Currently In-Progress

- Stabilization grant will help us understand staffing costs and enrollment
- Improved rate reporting will support an understanding of revenue
- Upcoming efforts to understand drivers of market rates and program costs will support a better understanding of program economics
- Grant funded program supports are tracking program engagement

Considerations for Data Discussion

- Programs face significant financial challenges
- Parent demand remains down and family needs are shifting
- Programs reported increased costs and significant loss of income during the pandemic
- Many programs report closing classrooms due to educator shortage, reducing costs and income
- In first week, over 75% of programs applied for ARPA grant funding
- Impacts on investments in quality unclear

Discussion

- Within the boundaries of the available data, what new approaches might enable us to evaluate systemic progress?
- Where might data help us understand the impact of innovation within the opportunities we have identified?
- Are there other data points we should be thinking about, short-term or longer-term?



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Innovating through Partnerships

Small Group Discussion

Consider the challenges and opportunities of the Massachusetts landscape, especially those relating to child care. Building from the readings, our discussion today, and your own experience and knowledge, please advise on the following question:

Where might partnerships be leveraged to advance impact?



Characteristics of a Public Private Partnership

- 1 Crosses sectors – government, philanthropy, non-profit, private
- 2 Frequently long term in nature to ensure sustainable change
- 3 Not always financial – can be products, services, technology targeted to meet a pressing need
- 4 Work best when there is transparency and mutual accountability to end goals
- 5 Can seed an innovation; scale a promising solution; produce learning, surface information



Discussion Template

Consider the challenges and opportunities of the Massachusetts landscape, especially those relating to child care. Building from the readings, our discussion today, and your own experience and knowledge, please advise on the following questions.

What specific problem or issue in early education might best be addressed through a public private partnership? Try out a case example or idea.

In an ideal world, how would that partnership work? Does it seed an innovation, scale a promising solution, produce learning, other? What's the design and lever for change?

What would impact and success look like? What progress monitoring strategy should be used to capture impact and success?



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Innovating through Partnerships

Large Group Discussion

What problems do we want to solve, at least in part, through partnerships?

Does the partnership seed an innovation, scale a promising solution, produce learning, other? How?

What progress monitoring strategy should be used to capture impact and evaluate success?

Board Agency Collaboration in Problem Solving *Discussion*

Annual milestones and commitments

Strategic work of the Board



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Appendix



EEC Oversight and Appropriations

\$740m annual budget

Almost 85% of EEC funding is dedicated to subsidized tuition supports

Approximately 70% of EEC funding is from federal sources

Line Item	Description of Purpose and Investment	Estimated Amount
Administration	Funds staff positions and six offices across the Commonwealth	\$6,150,000
Quality Supports	Funds monitoring and licensing activities, quality supports, coaching and technical assistance for programs and educators in the child care system	\$38,000,000
Access Management	Funds child care resource and referral activities, as well as a statewide parent hotline	\$9,800,000
Subsidy Investments	Supports tuition reimbursement subsidies to up to ~55,000 vulnerable children birth-fourteen enrolled in child care	\$621,000,000
Grants to Head Start	Supports a grant to all Head Start grantees in MA to help meet their non-federal match	\$12,000,000
Commonwealth Preschool Partnership Initiative	Funds 9 communities across the state in an innovative funding partnership between the LEA and local child care providers	\$7,000,000
Mental Health Consultation	Funds access to mental and behavioral health consultants for coaching and technical assistance to child care providers	\$2,200,000
Community and Family Engagement	Supports a network of 88 community collaboratives designed to provide parenting resources and supports to all families in every community	\$14,000,000
Higher Education-Career Pathways	Supports a targeted initiative across all the network of state community colleges to develop credit-bearing CDA course work to increase the supply of qualified educators	\$10,600,000
Additional Earmarks, as appropriated	Legislative priorities or targeted initiatives appropriated on an annual basis	Varied each year



Appendix: Sustainability Dashboard

Outcomes	Leading indicators	Baseline
<p>Programs are stabilized and increase their sustainability</p>	<p>a) Growth in licensed capacity (slots) by region, program type</p> <p>b) Growth in licensed agencies by region, program type</p> <p>c) Decrease in program closings</p> <p>Source: EEC Administrative Records</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FY19: 236,237 licensed EEC slots available for children and youth across MA • FY19: 8,699 there were licensed EEC organizations providing early care and education services across MA • In FY19, there were 755 EEC program closings across program types in MA
<p>Increased supply of professionally qualified EEC workforce</p>	<p>a) Increase in professionally qualified EEC workforce across MA</p> <p>b) Increase in qualified EEC workforce diversity by race, ethnicity, primary language</p> <p>c) Increase in average compensation by professional category</p> <p>Sources: EEC Professional Qualifications Registry; 2018 Bureau of Labor Statistics State Occupational & Wage Estimates</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 2019: there were 139,877 qualified professionals registered with EEC across all program types • In 2019: For 16% of all EEC-registered professionals, their primary language was other than English (23 other languages) • In 2019: the EEC workforce was 41% people of color • In 2018, the average wage in MA for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - a preschool teacher was \$39,180 annually (\$18.84/hour) - a preschool administrator was \$53,990 (\$25.96/hour) - a childcare worker was \$30,090 (\$14.47/hour)



Appendix: Community Dashboard

Outcomes	Leading indicators	Baseline
Families gain equitable access to needed supports	a) Increase in licensed capacity in areas of greatest need b) Increase in #/% of children in low-income families receiving childcare subsidies c) Increase in #/% of infants and toddlers in low-income households receiving childcare subsidies d) Increase in children ages 9-35 months receiving developmental screening with parent-completed tool like ASQ Sources: EEC Administrative Records, 2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates- Age by Ratio of Income to Poverty in the Past 12 Months, 2017-2018 National Survey of Children's Health, Child and Adolescent Health Measurement Initiative)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In 2019, there is an estimated EEC capacity gap 45,901 slots for ages 0-4 in 'childcare deserts' across the state FY19: 48,025 or ~36% of all low-income children aged 0-5 received childcare subsidies FY19: 19,198 or 24.6% of all subsidies were for infants and toddlers In 2017-18, 37% of parents completed a developmental screen for their children
Children are on track to 3rd grade success	a) Increase in 4 th grade reading proficiency levels b) Increase in 4 th grade math proficiency levels Source: Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2019: 56% of all students and 33% of economically disadvantaged students are meeting or exceeding state proficiency standards for Reading 2019: 49% of all students and 31% of economically disadvantaged students are meeting/exceeding state proficiency standards for Math



Systemwide Investments During COVID-19

Goals

To efficiently and effectively steward public investments

EEC continued to support families, children, educators and programs during the pandemic.

- \$19 Million for operating the Emergency Child Care Program (EECP)
- \$25 Million for workforce and facilities grants for providers
- \$35 Million for stipends to providers operating during COVID-19
- \$32 Million on PPE and Mobile Testing supports
- \$81 Million to cover the cost of parent fees for subsidized child care